

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

To Improve the Academy

Professional and Organizational Development  
Network in Higher Education

---

1986

## Peripheral Programming: An Approach to Faculty Development

Andy Farquharson

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad>



Part of the [Higher Education Administration Commons](#)

---

Farquharson, Andy, "Peripheral Programming: An Approach to Faculty Development" (1986). *To Improve the Academy*. 101.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/podimproveacad/101>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in To Improve the Academy by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

# Peripheral Programming: An Approach to Faculty Development

Andy Farquharson  
University of Victoria

## THE ORIGINAL ROLE OF THE LEARNING AND TEACHING CENTRE

Many Centres struggle with the issue of low rates of participation. The purpose of this paper is to show how one Centre attacked this problem systematically and to provide some models to help other Centres analyze their own programming.

The ingredients that contribute to limited faculty participation in programs for teaching development are familiar: tenure procedures give little recognition to teaching excellence, the pressure towards specialization makes undergraduate teaching less appealing, colleagues often do not value the proficient teacher, and faculty seldom receive any pre-service preparation for teaching. Prior to the Fall of 1985 the mission of the Learning and Teaching Centre at the University of Victoria had been exclusively in the domain which Bergquist and Phillips (1975) described as Instructional Development. The Centre offered seminars on teaching methods and peer teaching workshops together with research projects and various forms of consultation. This pattern was modestly successful, although the role of the Centre did not seem to be fully understood and accepted on the campus, and workshops and seminars were often poorly attended. This spurred the staff of the Centre to focus greater attention on ways to increase the rate of faculty participation in the various program activities.

## INITIATIVES

The direction selected was to move into the second domain identified by Bergquist and Phillips, namely that of Personal Development.<sup>1</sup> This is referred to in this paper as "Peripheral Programming" because the original mandate of this particular Centre was to focus more or less exclusively on the teaching responsibilities of faculty.

The Centre had already run regular orientations for new faculty and teaching assistants and was involved in the support of innovative teaching projects through an Academic Development Fund. Four additional initiatives were launched: (a) additional orientations to campus services, (b) training for non-teaching aspects of the professorial mandate, (c) building cross-disciplinary relationships between faculty, and (d) personal or life-skills learning. Examples of programs in each of these areas are indicated in Figure 1. These sessions attracted large numbers of participants and evaluations were positive, although sessions like the Tax Planning seminars tended to provoke some questioning of the role of the Centre.

### TYPES OF PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

PROGRAM AREA	SAMPLE ACTIVITIES
ORIENTATIONS	AUDIO VISUAL SERVICES COMPUTER SERVICES RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
NON-TEACHING ROLES	PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURES MEETING MANAGEMENT EDITING PAPERS THESIS SUPERVISION
CROSS-DISCIPLINARY RELATIONSHIPS	LAYMAN'S LEARNING LUNCHES PEER REVIEW EXCHANGE
PERSONAL SKILLS	UNDERSTANDING THE PENSION PLAN TAX PLANNING FOR ACADEMICS

FIGURE 1

One of the unanticipated consequences of this program thrust was that new constituencies of participants were attracted to some of these sessions. For example, the seminar on Parliamentary Procedures attracted, in addition to faculty, executive members of two campus-based unions, several librarians and members of the administrative-professional staff group. Both the administrative staff group and the Unions were vocal in their appreciation of the session and positively strident in expressing the wish for more development opportunities of a similar nature. The Centre staff had some initial concern about overstepping the mandate of the Centre, but with the active support of the Director of Personnel and the approval of the Vice President, Academic, plans are underway to explore modest program initiatives geared to the specific needs of faculty administrators in the coming years.

Another new constituency was revealed at the session on Thesis Supervision. This had primarily been intended for faculty, but many graduate students attended as well, and they identified a need for greater understanding of alternative word processing hardware and software that might be used in preparing theses. This resulted in a subsequent workshop on this specific topic.

In effect the Centre now finds itself progressing into Bergquist and Phillips' third programming domain, that of Organizational Development. The projection for the next nine months is very modest, being limited to a possible management skills program for new chairmen and directors and a Mediation Skills workshop for Sexual Harassment Advisors. More extensive activity of this nature could only be achieved with some additional earmarked funding for such programs.

## DEVELOPING LEGITIMACY

In retrospect it was evident that these program initiatives did conform to sound principles drawn from progressive legitimation, which is a familiar strategy in the field of Community Development. This model suggests that any change agent has to pass through three stages of developing credibility before they are in a position to influence fundamental change. The first level is to achieve legitimation as a source of maintenance behaviors, that is, undramatic but useful activities which make

the status quo of the situation easier to live with. In this particular case the workshop on Grading Essays or the various orientations to campus services would be typical examples of this first level of building credibility.

The second, or organizational, level of activity is more easily addressed once a floor of maintenance activity has been established. Interventions at this level involve modest suggestions about ways to restructure current activities, for example a workshop on techniques for editing academic papers. Eventually, when some degree of maintenance and organizational credibility has been established, the ground is prepared for interventions that are clearly change oriented: major reform of old practices or the introduction of new behaviors. In the world of faculty development this could be exemplified by a significant attempt to move faculty towards greater understanding and appropriate use of skills developed in micro-teaching workshops. These various stages of building credibility are summarized in Figure 2.

## RESULTS

To date the peripheral programming approach has achieved (1) a larger profile for the Centre, (2) new constituencies of learners, and (3) an increase in the numbers of faculty members

### BUILDING CREDIBILITY

#### A THREE-STAGE PROCESS

<b>MAINTENANCE:</b> Sustaining present system operation	*Orientations to services *Grading Essays
<b>ORGANIZATION:</b> Modest reshaping of activities	*Course planning *Voice & Oral delivery
<b>CHANGE:</b> Significant shifts in process & structures	*Microteaching workshops *Computer Assisted Instruction

FIGURE 2

who use the services of the Learning and Teaching Centre. In some ways this is akin to getting the horse to water—but the challenge remains of persuading the creature to drink. To put this more practically, it is evident that large numbers of faculty can be attracted to sessions on Meeting Management or Tax Planning, and now the task is to try to persuade a growing proportion of these participants to become involved in additional programs that more directly enhance their teaching.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND CHALLENGES

The program for the next academic year has developed direction from three conceptual frameworks: (1) The Target/Legitimacy Matrix, (2) a Felt-needs/Perceived-needs typology, and (3) the work of Rogers on the Diffusion of Innovation.

### The Target/Legitimation Model

In Figure 3 the three domains of faculty development activity delineated by Bergquist and Phillips and the three stage model of legitimation have been combined. This has proved to be a useful tool in conceptualizing the nature of program activities to date and suggesting future areas of activity. In the following year a concentrated effort will be made to attract faculty to the teaching skills workshops (Target I, Legitimation III), to sessions on Desk Top and File Management (Target II

### TARGET/LEGITIMACY MATRIX LEGITIMACY

T A R G E T S		I. Maintenance	II Organization	III. Change
	I Instructional	GRADING ESSAYS	PLANNING WORKSHOPS	MICRO- TEACHING SKILLS
	II Personal	EDITING ACADEMIC PAPERS	DESK TOP & FILE MANAGEMENT	STRESS REDUCTION
	III Organizational	ORIENTATIONS TO SERVICES	MEETING MANAGEMENT	COMPUTER LITERACY

FIGURE 3

and Legitimation II) and Computer Literacy (Target III and Legitimation III).

### Faculty Development Needs Model

A complementary approach to program planning is based on a model of needs assessment in continuing education (Farquharson, 1978; Luft, 1970). In Figure 4, the two basic arms of the matrix reflect a difference between needs felt by the learner as contrasted with learner needs perceived by others. Thus Quadrant I includes many of the programs that run successfully because they meet needs experienced by faculty and perceived by the development office. Quadrant III includes new program needs which faculty and others have indicated to the Centre. In the case of the Centre at the University of Victoria, examples include the request of Graduate Students for a workshop on word processing and from faculty members who wished to explore methodological issues related to the teaching of content relating to women, their history, roles and experience. The strategies in Quadrant III may be characterised as "canvassing," and the mass appeal programs geared to some of the felt

### A CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

	Known to Faculty	Unknown to Faculty
Known to Development Office	E.G. I. Pointers on Parliamentary Procedures Writing Grant Applications	M a r k e t i n g E.G. II. C.A.I.: Basic Literacy Micro-Teaching Sessions
Unknown to Development Office	Canvassing III. Teaching Content Related to Women Word Processing for Graduate Students	IV. Comparing and Imaging

FIGURE 4.

needs of faculty can be used as a forum to learn about other felt needs not previously identified by the faculty development office. In the future, as well as more traditional forms of needs surveys, a second tier of departmental representatives will be developed to complement the Advisory Committee and to relate the Centre to felt needs at the grass-roots level. The fourth and final quadrant presents a unique challenge as it represents needs that are unrecognized by both faculty and the development office. Strategies of need identification in this case include comparing one's own program offerings with those of other institutions and self-consciously developing a clear image of the challenges that may confront faculty in the near future. This could include changes in the demography of the student body, fresh advances in instructional technology and previously unrecognized pockets of unreached learning potential.

### Diffusion of Innovation

In considering ways to encourage faculty to adopt new practices, there are lessons to be learned from the literature on the diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 1983). This material describes the forces which support or impede the dissemination and adoption of new practices and sheds some light on the way in which the impact of current instructional innovations could be enhanced. For example, at the university in question, two innovations which tend to encourage the adoptions of new teaching behaviors are the advent of Distance Education methods and the introduction of Computer Assisted Instruction. In the first instance, faculty who agree to develop such distance courses are typically confronted with a course development team which will almost certainly include an instructional design specialist. Initially, there may be some difficult exchanges between members of the course team, but typically the product of their work together is not only a course *per se*, but a faculty member with a new or renewed commitment to systematic instructional design and learner-sensitive modes of delivery. These insights almost invariably seem to carry over and to impact positively on campus-based instruction. Houle (1980) builds on the work of Rogers in suggesting ways to harness the capacities of early adopters of new practices in order to promote continuing professional development. These actors are

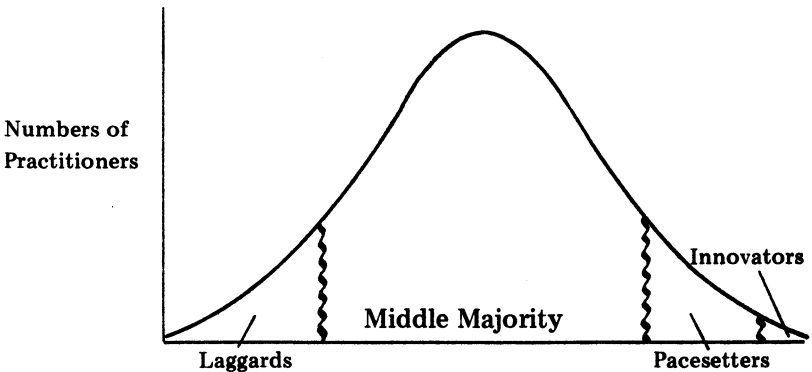


described in Figure 5 as the Innovators and the Pacesetters and are exemplified particularly by those faculty involved in distance education and C.A.I. The challenge to the Centre is to use a variety of program strategies to enhance the spread of these innovations to the middle majority. This process has been initiated by a series of articles in the Centre newsletter describing C.A.I., several workshops for computer neophytes, and the creation of a C.A.I. Users Group composed of innovators and pacesetters. This strategy has paid off in an increased demand for C.A.I. training and a modest redeployment of resources to meet this need. The spin-off value in terms of improvement in other instructional practices is difficult to document, but there is a clear impression that this does take place as faculty come to appreciate the value of more systematic approaches to instruction.

## IN SUMMARY

Faculty confront a range of competing demands on their time and talents and it is no easy task to involve them in professional development programs geared to their teaching responsibilities. However, there are two alternative strategies which can be employed to foster increased participation in such

## ACTORS IN THE ADOPTION OF INNOVATIONS



Adapted from Houle (1980) p. 155. Reprinted with permission from the author and Jossey-Bass Publisher.

**FIGURE 5.**

learning events. The first relies on tapping faculty motivation that is not directly related to the teaching function, and the second employs the active dissemination of naturally occurring innovations in teaching. Several different models are suggested which can support this kind of program planning activity and, as the field of faculty development matures, we can expect to find more conceptual systems to support the art of current practice.

## REFERENCES

- Bergquist, W.H. and Phillips, S.R. (1975). Components of an effective faculty development program. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 46, 177-211.
- Farquharson, A. (1978). Planning needs assessment activities. *Canadian Journal of University Continuing Education*, IV(2), 13-16.
- Houle, C.O. (1980). *Continuing learning in the professions*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Luft, J. (1970). *Group processes: An introduction to group dynamics*, (2nd, ed.). Palo Alto, CA: National Press Books.
- Rogers, E.M. (1983). *Diffusion of innovations* (3rd. ed.). New York: The Free Press.
- Wolke, R.L. (1980). Faculty development explained. *Journal of Chemical Education*, 57, 838-840.

## NOTES

1. Wolke (1980) describes Personal Development programs as including: faculty orientations, interdisciplinary studies, academic exchanges, individual development plans and grants for innovative projects.